

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the claims indicating the current status of each claim and including amendments currently entered as highlighted.

1-19. (canceled)

20. (new) A nail-guiding device that assists in the proper guiding of a nail with respect to a surface and with respect to a driver, comprising:

- a. a body including abutment features for abutment against the surface and a sleeve defining a linear passage;
- b. a flexible membrane deployed so as to at least partially overlap an end of said linear passage, said flexible membrane including an opening for engaging the shaft of a nail; and
- c. a piston slideably engaged in said linear passage and operative to transfer the impact of the driver to the nail in a drive-in operation,

wherein said membrane is sufficiently flexible to allow insertion via said opening of the head of a nail having dimensions greater than dimensions of said opening,

and wherein said membrane is deployed relative to said abutment features such that, when said abutment features are brought into abutment with the surface, at least a portion of said flexible membrane adjacent to said opening is spaced away from the surface, thereby holding and guiding the nail throughout said drive-in operation.

21. (new) The device of claim 20, wherein said piston includes a first end operatively associated with said linear passage first end, the piston first end including a concave surface suitable for centering a head of said nail.

22. (new) The device of claim 20, wherein said membrane is fixedly attached to said body.

23. (new) The device of claim 22, wherein said fixed attachment is effected by gluing.

24. (new) The device of claim 22, wherein said fixed attachment is effected by injection molding.

25. (new) The device of claim 20, wherein said flexible membrane is made of rubber.

26. (new) The device of claim 20, wherein said opening is round.

27. (new) The device of claim 20, wherein said body includes an accessory storage compartment.

28. (new) The device of claim 20, wherein said body includes a level indicator.

29. (new) A hand tool for assisting the driving of a nail into a surface at a drive-in location, comprising:

- a. a guiding mechanism having abutment features for abutting the surface and a flexible membrane nail holding and guiding element, said flexible membrane nail holding and guiding element including an opening for engaging the shaft of a nail; and

b. a driving element slideably engaged in said guiding mechanism and operative to drive the nail into the substrate at the drive-in location, wherein said membrane nail holding and guiding element is sufficiently flexible to allow insertion via said opening of the head of a nail having dimensions greater than dimensions of said opening, and wherein said membrane nail holding and guiding element is deployed relative to said abutment features such that, when said abutment features are brought into abutment with the surface, at least a portion of said flexible membrane nail holding and guiding element adjacent to said opening is spaced away from the surface, thereby holding and guiding the nail throughout said drive-in operation.

30. (new) The hand tool of claim 29, wherein said membrane is fixedly attached to said guiding mechanism.

31. (new) The hand tool of claim 29, wherein said membrane is made of rubber.

32. (new) The hand tool of claim 29, wherein said opening is round.

33. (new) The hand tool of claim 29, wherein said opening is slit.

34. (new) A method for driving a nail into a surface comprising the steps of:

a. providing a body including abutment features for abutment against the surface and a sleeve defining a linear passage;

- b. providing a flexible membrane deployed so as to at least partially overlap an end of said linear passage, said flexible membrane including an opening for engaging the shaft of a nail;
- c. providing a piston slideably engaged in said linear passage and operative to transfer the impact of the driver to the nail in a drive-in operation;
- d. inserting the head of a nail via said opening, the head of the nail having dimensions greater than dimensions of said opening and passing through said opening by flexing of said membrane;
- e. deploying said abutment features in abutment with the surface while at least a portion of said flexible membrane adjacent to said opening remains spaced away from the surface, thereby holding and guiding the nail; and
- f. impacting said piston so that the nail is driven into the surface while being guided by said flexible membrane.

35. (new) The method of claim 34, wherein said piston includes a concave end, and wherein said step of inserting the head of the nail includes engaging the head of the nail with said concave end.

36. (new) The method of claim 34, wherein said flexible membrane is a fixedly attached to said body.